Fe@tures

Air Force Research Laboratory
AFRL

Unleashing the power of innovative aerospace technology....

news@*afrl*

Summer 1999 **Official voice of the Air Force Research Laboratory**

Top Scientist previews munitions during Eglin visit

by Bill Thornton, Munitions directorate

EGLIN AFB, FLA. — Air Force Chief Scientist Dr. Daniel E. Hastings visited Air Force Research Laboratory's Munitions directorate here recently. The visit brought him up to date on weapon technology developments during the past few years.

Hastings received information about the Small Smart Bomb and the low-cost Autonomous Attack System. He also participated in several unique hands-on testing operations. At the Advanced Warhead Experimentation Facility, Hastings witnessed the detonation of a new explosive formulation called MNX-777.

His visit to the Fuze Experimentation Facility was not quite as noisy. There he assisted technicians gathering penetration information when he fired a 105mm Howitzer and test fired the "Barrett" .50 caliber rifle.

"These are old, but useful tools in our business," said Walt Maine, ordnance division chief. "These guns are used as launchers for experimental warheads and sub-scale projectiles.

"Our scientists record each shot and are able to analyze how the projectile penetrated the target. Not many people associate an Army Howitzer with developing air-delivered weapon concepts. Dr. Hastings was surprised when he saw Army artillery on an Air Force base. But, when we explained its purpose and how it was being used, he understood."

According to Dr. Robert Sierakowski, Munitions directorate chief scientist, visits like these are vital, "especially if Air Force senior leaders are to gain genuine appreciation for the role the Munitions directorate, as part of AFRL and Air Armament Center, plays in providing war-fighter capabilities. Dr. Hastings' tour of our facilities also gave him the opportunity to gain first-hand insights into the wide range of experimentation and research capabilities that we have here on Eglin, as well as of our past accomplishments."

Hastings serves as chief scientific adviser to the Air Force chief of staff and the secretary of the Air Force. He provides assessments on a wide range of scientific and technical issues affecting the Air Force mission. **@**